

LEADERSHIP OF THE FUTURE

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ABSTRACT

On the one hand, when leadership manifests itself, the roles assumed by the leader are extremely important, but, on the other hand, the roles assumed by the members of an organisation are important as well. “Shaping” the future is made starting from several variables: the evolution of technology, the cultural conflicts, the uneven economic developments, the diversity of contexts which very often do not depend on “actors”, the quality of political leaders, and the complexity of social problems that arise. In light of these variables, leadership can play a decisive role to the extent that suitable individuals appear in crisis situations, individuals who use a visionary and creative leadership which is influenced by the values in which people find themselves. We can speak of a favourable direction in terms of development to the extent that the leadership has the ability to influence social groups to act in a certain way as to achieve certain goals shared by the group. The aim of our paper is to present some of the current concerns regarding leadership and its evolution in relation to the evolution of society in general starting from the dramatic changes occurring in the economic, social, political, technological and cultural fields and also to highlight some of the future directions of leadership. The research methodology is based on literature review.

Key words: action, attitude, development, leadership, vision

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1. INTRODUCTION

The world of the future defines its mark through sometimes imperceptible changes of today which anticipates the future. The frequency, speed and importance of changes influence in a decisive way people's trajectory, but also the social groups' and society's trajectory. We observe that very often certain personalities create system architectures whose way of operating influence in a decisive way the economic and social systems (Benoit, 2007).

Leadership represents everyone's problem and, even if one of us has a personal response method, when finding ourselves in situations of professional and social commitment certain roles are being imposed to us, roles that we must assume. Even in situations when we are not leaders, we can influence the others so that in a prompt and precise manner we can play the role of informal leaders. As we have entered into a new era for business, leadership has continuously changed and will change even more in the future. There are several forces that are driving this change such as globalization, the rise of complex challenges, a world of interruption, the acceleration in the scope, scale and economic impact of technology, and leadership for longevity (Martin, 2007; Dobbs, Manyika and Woetzel, 2015).

However, the effectiveness and efficiency will remain the basic characteristics of leadership. But they are not the only components of a powerful leadership because without the ethical dimension, it would lose its essential meaning. Leadership of the future will set itself up in a system of values that will require and impose a new type of leadership that will use power in favour of the individual, group and organization. Therefore, a high character and ethical leadership is needed (Allio, 2009; Ehrich et al., 2015; Leavy, 2016), a leadership marked by humanitarian values because current technology offers each individual the opportunity to learn and to know, to be permanently informed. On the other hand, some authors believe that the development of emotional intelligence plays an important role in defining a participatory leadership where self-direction represents a permanent compass for the individual and for the group as well (Yeung, 2006). In fact, leadership is "a relational process involving interaction with a range of stakeholders and structures" (Duckett, Macfarlane, 2003, p. 310). From this perspective we can speak of an organizational intelligence and an individual intelligence.

The evolution of the concept of leadership (the authentic leadership, the transformational leadership, the ethical leadership, the cognitive leadership, the transactional leadership, the participatory leadership, the intercultural leadership - Avolio, Walumbwa, Weber, 2009) leads to the idea that the emergence of e-leadership is foreshadowed due to the new technologies. This concept defines "virtual realities" which may represent a variety of possible directions that are established in relation to the leaders' decisions within the nodes of a network. E-leadership is closely related to virtual organizations (network organizations) that will define another reality where its employees can be at great distances but they can also make decisions at the level of a network node or the network itself. In such conditions we can talk of a leadership distributed across all nodes within the network with changing the centre of decision from a node to another in relation to the needs of the network. In the virtual teams challenges are "more likely to occur when distributed work occurs in different time zones, when local communication and human infrastructures fail, when team members' hardware and software platforms are different, or when local work demands require the immediate attention of collocated managers and workers, thereby creating pressure to pursue local priorities over the

objectives of distant collaborators” (Weisband, 2008). Connexion and rankings are contrived to design effective university report cards. This encapsulates validity of measures, extensiveness of measures, unambiguousness and relevance of information for students, proficiency of rankings proportionality to convalesce teaching and student learning (Raghav, S., Tiwari, A., Gautam, M., Arya, K.S., Raghav, Y., & Thakran, A., 2016).

We must keep in mind that leadership focuses not only on the behaviour of the leader, but also on the behaviours of the individuals within a group in relation to the context, culture, the whole spectrum of diversity and social dynamics.

The aims of our paper are to present some of the current concerns regarding leadership and its evolution in relation to the evolution of society in general starting from the dramatic changes occurring in the economic, social, political, technological and cultural environments and also to highlight some of the future directions of leadership. The research methodology is based on literature review.

2. THE PERSPECTIVES OF LEADERSHIP

In the evolution of leadership changes will occur, changes that are being influenced in a decisive way by the relation between the corporation as a network and clients who, in turn, are part of a variety of other networks. Thus, an inevitable closeness is occurring between the client and the corporation so that, on the one hand, products and services will be customized and, on the other hand, decisions may be taken in relation to reality even by members of the corporate network. In this regard, Beaubien’s remark is very illustrating “as technological advances make answers easy to find, companies will reward leaders who ask the right questions. Fast, market-based decisions will trump top-down leadership hierarchies, with decision-making authority extending to the edges of the organization, where employees are closest to customers and work directly in partnership with them” (Beaubien, 2014).

In the evolution of the companies of the future and the society in general, one must establish an optimal balance between leadership and management, on the one hand and between leader and manager, on the other hand. Starting from the conceptual boundaries that exist between effectiveness and efficiency, one must clearly establish the action areas of leadership and the action areas of management. Apparently, there is not a great distance from vision to allocation of resources, but such relationship is translated into appropriate behaviours which define modes of action and reaction of the leader, on one hand, and the manager, on the other hand. Clearly, at the level of an organization, the manager must also own leadership qualities because in extreme situations in which the leader finds himself permanently he cannot limit his activity only in the allocation of resources. He has to have vision and, at the same time, he must also be convincing. MacPhearson’s observations, “... is leadership enough? The simple answer is no! We need management to execute the day-to-day missions and we need leadership to weather the storms (which seem to be continuous and ever-changing)” (MacPhearson, 2015) are enlightening in relation to the complementarity of the leadership and management as forms of manifestation and in relation to the way in which decisions can be taken within the organizations of the future by each member of the network compared to the existing needs.

The society of the future will be subject to pressures that often are not anticipated. The process of preventing the extreme situations or the process of adapting thereof will require a new type of behaviour of the individual and the organization simultaneously. It will require quick adaptation, creating new competences, preventing or managing conflict situations and, not ultimately, changing the value systems. We can talk about situations where real “collisions” between the personal (individual) value systems and the organisational value systems may occur. Such situations remind us of the process of natural selection. In fact, this

is about the rapid adaptation of the individual and the organisation to those situations in which they find themselves, situations that, in most cases, are not caused by them. The process of changing the organizational culture becomes a necessity when stakeholders require rapid change. The vision and the strategies of the organization must be made compatible with the new culture implemented. Within this “game”, motivating people is essential as it may enforce a type of conduct for each of the employees so that organizational objectives are achieved - an idea shared by Seraina Maag as well who says that “...there are so many takeaways but, for me, the theme that really stands out is the importance of changing organizational culture. Achieving genuinely diverse leadership in business takes more than just token gestures: it needs a change of mind-set from the top down”. (Seraina, 2015).

Leadership also means the inspiring and charismatic behaviour in which moral values are clearly defined and permanently applied and the management is seen as a permanent transformation where the challenge of each individual, but also the permanent intellectual stimulation represent genuine rules. Given that the spirit of leadership stands for values, attitudes and behaviours which are essential for motivating individuals, we can speak of “a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership”. (Fry, 2003).

Making leadership compatible with the new value system must take into account the traditions of the group, the relationships that are established within, the aspirations and, not least, the identity of each individual and, at the same time, the identity of the organization.

Here, we can refer to the brand of a company, but also to the brand of an individual as well. The representation component is extremely important because, on the one hand, it has a motivating character, and on the other hand, it contributes to the enhancement of the credibility of the organization and, accordingly, of the products and services that such organisation provides. The quality of relationships reveals both the content of internal relations, as well as the shades of the external relations (for example: suppliers, beneficiaries, banks, public institutions, etc.). At the level of multinational companies, traditions play an important role because the network of each multinational company includes ways in which employees with different traditions, different value systems, diverse experiences and often unpredictable expectations develop themselves.

The scheme presented below provides information about the shades of possible combinations between levels (very high, high, moderate, low) of the four parameters (traditions, relationships, aspirations and identity).

In the paper *Leadership and the Art of Struggle*, Snyder's findings regarding the possible combinations of the four parameters at the level of some internationally recognized companies (Deloitte, Microsoft, General Motors, Apple, Boston Scientific Corporation, Pentair) are interesting. From this, it results that changing one of the four parameters from the maximum level to the inferior levels may create imbalances at the level of the other parameters as well. In fact, here we can talk about “a fine-tuning” that makes the difference between success and failure. Such changes which are apparently imperceptible must be made as a result of an analysis (SWOT, Stakeholders, Environment) which set, at a certain moment, the real relationships between “the combatants”. Leadership is the “Art of Struggle” (Snyder, 2013).

Leadership of the Future

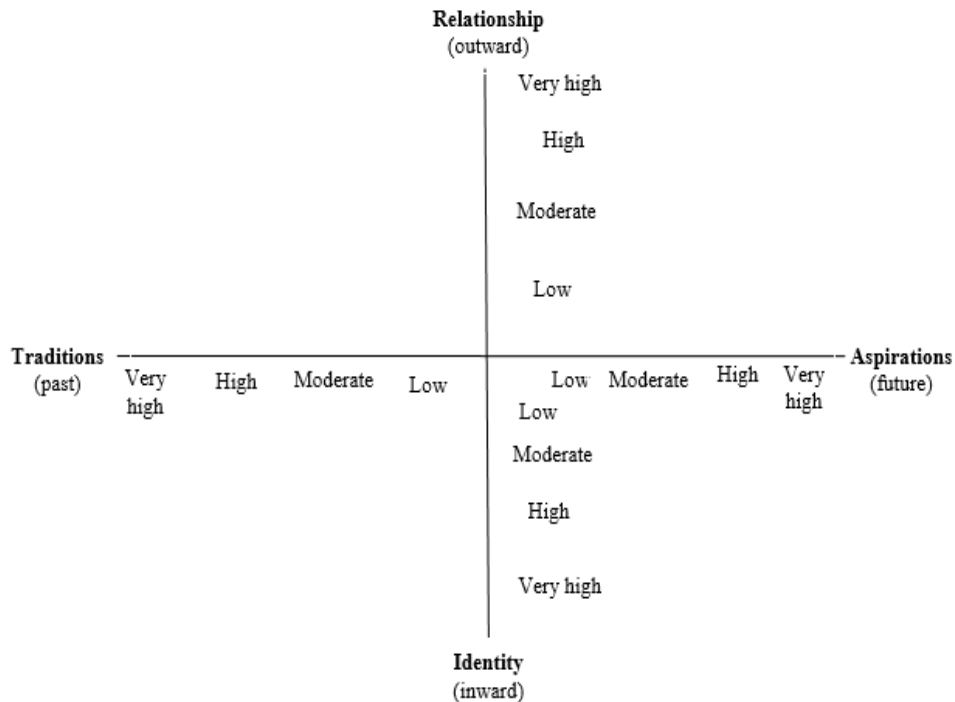


Figure 1 Leadership Tension Map

Source: Snyder (2013, p.67)

The leader of the future must be like a conductor in an orchestra knowing very well the competences of each employee, harmonizing such competences, implementing visions and convincing people in relation with the direction of evolution of the organization. Actually, “...the CEO of the future’s role will be to integrate these capabilities, to ensure that everyone helps build and sustain them, and to keep everything working in a highly refined system”. (Favaro, Karlsson and Neilson, 2015)

Refining the system means inclusively its connecting to the global network where it can influence and where it can be influenced as well. Nowadays we discover that companies like Facebook and Google use these “puzzle” elements offering a significance to each component of the picture and, at the same time, engaging them in a unitary whole (here we can speak of a synergistic vision and, at the same time, a systemic vision). These searches do not always mean the best solutions. Sometimes, syncope arises and they are accompanied by conflicts and this is the main reason why it is so important that the monitoring, control and assessment process at the level of systems to work flawlessly. The quality of relationships is also due to the consistency of the communication process. Within such, the entropy, redundancy and feedback represent essential factors that support the process of achieving the objectives.

In his work, “*Value systems and the future of leadership*”, Stephen Bungay ascertains that leaders “turn plans into actions and results”. (Bungay, 2011) The gaps mentioned by the author are in close relation to plans, actions and results. The gap between plans and results is influenced by knowledge; therefore knowledge management can contribute to decrease this gap. The gap between plans and actions is influenced by alignment; such gap may be decreased if there is synchronization between what we want to achieve and what we accomplish in reality. The gap between actions and results is influenced by effects: here we consider the ratio of what we hope to achieve and what we accomplish in reality.

These gaps highlight the fact that any plan that aims to achieve objectives through the use of resources can lead to poor results unless there is a perfect synchronization between actions and results when our purpose is to accomplish a plan. (Bungay, 2011).

The analysis of the current forms of governance (corporate or public) enables us to anticipate future developments. In the evolution of a product or a company (or even a reality) there are several phases: emergence, maturation, extinction. The speed of implementing such phases will increase and, consequently, decisions will be closely linked to the components of risk management. In terms of probabilities, the ability of some organizations to identify and process data will enable them to take major decisions almost in real time. In a virtual world, the transparency of systems will be increasingly higher not because “actors” really want this, but because technology will require such transparency. At the same time, this is an imperative for both professional ethics and regulations as well. Favaro, Karlsson and Neilson further make an enlightening remark “... future governance models will be more diverse: although the C-corporation will still exist in some form, other forms of governance will emerge that could obviate the need for a chairman, especially given the prime necessity for agility and transparency”. (Favaro, Karlsson and Neilson, 2015).

Leadership must build trust within organization signifying the employees’ attachment toward organizational culture, confidence in its activities, integrity, authenticity and empathy. In organizations with high levels of trust, employees are motivated to take responsibility and have the feeling that they have control over their own actions. (Owen, Hodgson and Gazzard, 2004).

In his work, *Full Alignment: A practical Guide to transforming Your Life Vision into Action*, Silard ascertains the fact that vision has an undeniable power in foreshadowing a future reality and for such it is necessary to identify the aptitudes that would help us strengthen the sources of our motivations. Self-esteem will also lead to the appreciation of others because, ultimately, selfknowledge or self-awareness may facilitate the process of knowing the others, and also the contexts in which we operate. From this perspective it is important to start evaluating ourselves and others starting from who we are in first place and then from what we do. This analysis must define very precisely the relation between KNOWING, DOING and BEING. Managing a system actually means shifting from knowledge to action and finally to mentality. The morality of the actions of the leading individual requires a certain type of behaviour at the level of the team members as well. The power of example means behaviour assumed which is decoded by the employees from the behaviour the leader has in the evolution of the three plans mentioned above.

An important role in the evolution of leadership is played by the environment where emotional intelligence manifests itself as a combination of self-awareness, self-control, social conscience and the ability to manage relationships. Emotional intelligence quantifies our potential to learn the fundamentals of self-control. The leadership of the future will require the insertion of the social and emotional education in schools but also within companies. (Goleman, 2005).

It is obvious that each field will impose types of leadership with common characteristics but also with specific elements that are connected to the reality of the context in which the organization exists. There are differences between the ways leadership manifests itself within the following fields: entertainment, IT, finance, etc. The question that one should address is whether rigor is compatible with creativity. Most of the personalities who created business in various fields admit that an optimal combination between rigor and creativity can lead to high performance. This “optimal” is specific to every leader and every context developed by the leader. To support this idea, Landy (2012) mentions that “... it's safe to say that financial institutions will be looking for leaders with swift response times, an appreciation for the

impact of new technology, an ability to manage an ever-widening circle of stakeholders, and a knack for collaboration, be it across business silos or with outside partners”. (Landy, 2012).

The training of the leaders of tomorrow must begin from early childhood through appropriate forms of education that create variables contexts in which each of them to be able to discover his own potential and, at the same time, to relate to others. Periodic evaluations at the completion of the study cycles (at 6 years old, at 10 years old, at 14 years old, at 18 years old) should provide useful information regarding the evolution of each individual and would be useful to family, school, society, companies and last but not least, to the one who is evaluated. Higher education can become a goal for those who are involved in this process. Therefore, “higher education institutions are poised to be leaders on the sustainability front. Not only are they able to develop responsible environmental policies and procedures for their campuses, but they are also essential for educating future leaders and entrusting them with the skills they need to face the challenges of tomorrow” (Prinster, 2016).

A characteristic of the leadership of the future is represented by its dynamism which translates as: permanent changes of the environmental parameters within which the organization evolves, the change in the stakeholders’ behaviour change, the employees’ mobility, the emergence of some crisis situations, etc. The variety of situations requires each employee to act in relation to the value system of the organization making the most of his own competences. Achieving the objectives of the organization is of utmost importance and the organisational interests are of great priority in relation to personal interests. The freedom to decide individually cannot jeopardize the major decisions of the organization. Network leadership must first establish the headquarters from where the distribution of power is made at the level of the network. Partida (2015) believes that “.dynamic leadership is a values-driven approach in that employees are discouraged from achieving business goals in ways that undermine the organization’s values. APQC’s study revealed that organizations with dynamic leadership see clear benefits. They report experiencing a smaller leadership skills gap and show less concern about a leadership skills shortage in the future.”

The organisational “truths” require the process of supporting their policies in order to achieve their objectives. Enhancing the loyalty of the employees is made through: their involvement within the decision making process, the continuous training, the possibility and opportunity to develop in terms of their career, various rewarding packages, permanent information in terms of the progress of the organization, communicating the content of major decisions, creating a family and familiar manifestation environment. Monitoring, control and evaluation of employees must not turn into a permanent state of stress because, in the end, conflicts will inevitably arise and they will be very difficult to manage. The moral behaviour of the leader will condition the types of behaviour of the team members and will facilitate the creation of some collaboration relationships thus discouraging the competitive relationships between employees. Dawlabani (2014) argues that “leadership is moralistic because management encodes the Truths from the dominant ideology and rewards believers, faithful servants, and those who work long hours. Leaders oversee the needs of followers and regulate their conduct. Moral capital and the ability to promise status in the future for those who obey are used to obtain conformity”. (Dawlabani, 2014).

3. CONCLUSION

The leadership of the future must bear in mind that the organisational “will” comes in contact with the independent will of the competition and taking over the initiative requires a constant training and definition of tactics and strategies to take the competition by surprise. No matter the alternatives chosen at a certain time in the evolution of the organization, one should not forget the major objectives. Within market competition it is not suffice to know only our

strategies and the strategies of our competitors, but we also should take into account the factors of uncertainty. The arbitral events can be favourable or unfavourable equally to all competitors. This is where the following step in: personal experiences, the capacity for analysis and synthesis, courage but not recklessness, access to information and ability to quickly process thereof, the possibility to use synergy as effect enhancer in partnerships with other competitors, benchmarking as method of observation, adaptation and usage of the experiences of the competitors.

Leadership of the future will have to comply with the rules of the consensual game which translates into the ability to express clearly one's opinion, the power to know the opinions of others and the lucidity to make the final in a consensual way starting from the "we decide together" principle. Practicing consensus will help the organization to develop a collective intelligence where the opinion of the leader who decides and the opinion of the executant are emphasized and valued in the final decision. Consensus will become an educational process that will develop team spirit even if we speak of virtual enterprises, "scattered" all over the world (Le Saget, 2013).

The development of the leadership means creating a unitary system in which development programs play a critical role not only for middle and top management, but also for each employee. The systemic vision requires each individual to be developed so that leadership will be able to emphasize the competences of each individual in the interest of the organisation. It would be damaging to develop a leadership "at the position level" because, in fact, leadership must be developed at the level of the entire organisational system.

Leadership will evolve in the future towards a holistic vision in which the leader becomes an integral part, together with the team, of the dynamic leading system. The concept of e-leadership will occur with an increasingly frequency as it will define the reality of networks and virtual companies. The causal mechanisms that determine the type of leadership will be analysed from the perspective of educating individuals, contexts in which they evolve and the teams they lead.

The process of examining the strategic leadership will constitute a priority within the analyses related to the theory and research in the field and will open new perspectives in terms of defining the relationships between leadership and management.

The phenomenon of globalization will redefine the business environment, and the significant strategic changes will radically transform the inter-organisational relationships. The multiple opportunities that arise due to the technological revolution will highlight the talent of individuals leading to high performances. The rapid rhythms of change will require taking over the initiative in the development of innovative strategies by individuals with exceptional leadership qualities. They will shape the organizations making them more flexible, less hierarchical, with flattening tendencies (within the network), thereby increasing the value added. The leadership of the future will define a framework in which direction shall have effect to the extent that changes are anticipated, management is authentic, the talent of each individual is quickly identified and immediately emphasized, and the social responsibility becomes the flagship of the new reality.

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